

Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources Basic Instrument for the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)

Basic Instrument

[Convention](#) for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, 1982

Implementing Legislation

Antarctic Marine Living Resources Convention [Act](#) of 1984 (16 U.S.C. 2431 *et seq.*)

Member Nations/Acceding States

Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, People's Republic of China, European Union, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Bulgaria, Canada, Cook Islands, Finland, Greece, Mauritius, Netherlands, Pakistan, Panama, Peru and Vanuatu have acceded to the Convention, but are not Members of the Commission.

Commission Headquarters

Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
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Budget

The Commission adopted a budget for 2014 of AU\$4,711,500 (approximately US\$3,660,718). The U.S. contribution for its dues in 2015 is AU\$125,022 (US\$97,139). Aggregate Member contributions for 2015 were maintained at the 2014 level, continuing the trend of remaining below the zero real growth budgetary target for the Commission

U.S. Representation

A. Appointment Process:

The Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Secretary of Commerce and the Director of the National Science Foundation, appoints an officer or employee of the United States as the U.S. representative to the Commission. The Secretary of Commerce and the Director of the National Science Foundation, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, designates the U.S. representative to the Scientific Committee.

B. U.S. Representative to the Commission:

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U.S. Representative to the Scientific Committee:

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C. Advisory Structure:

The U.S. Commissioner receives advice from the members of the U.S. delegation. The delegation includes representatives from the Department of State, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, Marine Mammal Commission, fishing industry, and the NGO community.

Description

A. Mission/Purpose:

The objective of the Convention is the conservation, which includes rational use, of Antarctic marine living resources. The Convention is based upon an ecosystem approach to the conservation of marine living resources and incorporates standards designed to ensure the conservation of populations and the Antarctic marine ecosystem as a whole.

The Convention applies to the Antarctic marine living resources of the area south of 60° South latitude and to the Antarctic marine living resources of the area between that latitude and the Antarctic Convergence which form part of the Antarctic marine ecosystem. The Antarctic Convergence is deemed to be a line joining the following points along parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude: 50°S, 0°; 50°S, 30°E; 45°S, 30°E; 45°S, 80°E; 55°S, 80°E; 55°S, 150°E; 60°S, 150°E; 60°S, 50°W; 50°S, 50°W; 50°S, 0°.

B. Organizational Structure:

The components of CCAMLR are the Commission, Scientific Committee, and the Secretariat. The Commission consists of one representative from each member country. It is responsible for facilitating research and compiling data on the populations of Antarctic marine living resources, ensuring the acquisition of catch and effort data, publishing information, identifying conservation needs, adopting and revising conservation measures, and implementing a system of observation and inspection. The Secretariat, headed by an Executive Secretary, handles the administrative matters for the Commission.

The Commission has two standing committees, the Standing Committee on Implementation and Compliance (SCIC) and the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance (SCAF). SCIC reviews and assesses the implementation of, and compliance with, CCAMLR's conservation measures and reviews information on IUU fishing. SCAF provides advice related to the budget and Secretariat operations.

The Scientific Committee is composed of scientific advisors from the member countries. It provides the best available scientific information on harvesting levels and other management issues to the Commission. The work of the Scientific Committee is carried out with the assistance of the Working Group on Fish Stock Assessment (WG-FSA); the Working Group on Ecosystem Monitoring and Management (WG-EMM); the Working Group on Incidental Mortality Associated with Fishing (WG-IMAF); the Subgroup on Acoustics, Survey and Analysis Methods (SG-ASAM); the Working Group on Statistics, Assessments and Modeling (WG-SAM); and the ad hoc Technical Group for At-Sea Operations (TASO).

C. Conservation Measures:

Paragraph 2 of Article IX of the CAMLR Convention provides a non-exhaustive list of conservation measures the Commission may adopt, including focuses on quantity and characteristics of harvested species, protection of species, open and closed seasons, open and closed geographic regions, regulation of fishing effort employed and methods of harvesting.

The Commission adopted its first conservation and management measures during its 1984 session (CCAMLR III). Each year, CCAMLR updates some of the conservation measures or adopts new measures.

The conservation measures are organized by general categories, including compliance, general fishery matters, fishery regulations, and protected areas. CCAMLR has also adopted non-binding resolutions that Members are encouraged to implement.

Compliance:

In the compliance category, CCAMLR conservation measures require marking of fishing vessels and gear, licensing and inspection obligations, port inspections of fishing vessels carrying Antarctic marine living resources, VMS requirements, toothfish catch documentation scheme, procedures related to IUU vessels, scheme promote compliance by Contracting Party nationals, notifications of transshipments, and a compliance evaluation procedure for Contracting Parties.

The Commission adopted a procedure in 2012 to give the Secretariat a formal mechanism to capture and record information on the implementation of conservation measures by Members. During the 2014 meeting, CCAMLR implemented for the second time a compliance evaluation procedure (CCEP) to assess Member compliance with conservation measures. Examples of non-compliance included failure to conduct port inspections of fishing vessels carrying toothfish, late submittal of VMS position reports and transshipment notifications, improperly sealed VMS units, improperly marked vessels, and failure to implement seabird bycatch mitigation measures. The discussions resulted in amendments to a conservation measure for marking of fishing vessels and fishing gear to reflect the text of the FAO Standard Specifications and Guidelines for the Marking and Identification of Fishing Vessels and amendments to conservation measures to provide for the inclusion of documentary or photographic evidence in port inspection reports to facilitate review of each issue of non-compliance.

During the 2014 meeting, the conservation measure for the catch documentation scheme (CDS) was significantly revised to improve clarity and reflect the operation of the current electronic CDS. The CDS is CCAMLR's system for tracking toothfish from the harvesting vessel and throughout the trade cycle. The CDS for toothfish (*Dissostichus* spp.) has been in effect since 2000 and has been operating as an electronic scheme since 2004. In May 2014, a Review Panel conducted an independent review of, and considered improvements to, the CDS. The recommendations fall into three categories: implementation and operation, changes to the CDS Conservation Measure itself, and suggestions on how to promote cooperation with Non-Contracting Parties. Most of the recommendations from the Review Panel were endorsed by the Commission at the 2014 annual meeting.

CCAMLR maintains a Non-Contracting Party IUU Vessel List. While it has procedures for a Contracting Party IUU Vessel List, there are no vessels on this list. In 2014, no new vessels were proposed for inclusion on the Contracting Party IUU Vessel List or the Non-Contracting Party IUU (NCP-IUU) Vessel List. The *Tiantai*, on the NCP IUU Vessel List, is assumed to have sunk in the Convention Area based on its distress beacon having been activated and a debris field in the vicinity of the beacon. Consequently, this vessel has been removed from the NCP IUU Vessel List.

General fishery matters:

CCAMLR maintains conservation measures related to notification requirements, gear restrictions, data reporting, research and experiments, minimization of incidental mortality, and environmental protection. Bottom trawling in the high seas areas of the Convention Area has been restricted since 2006. The use of gillnets is also currently prohibited in the Convention Area except for scientific research purposes. CCAMLR has measures for avoiding significant adverse impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems. Seabird conservation measures for longline and trawl gear have significantly reduced the number of incidental seabird mortality, from thousands of birds in the late 1990s to near zero in recent years.

CCAMLR has a conservation measure prohibiting directed fishing for sharks in the Convention Area, but allows for retention of incidentally-caught sharks that cannot be released alive. The measure is silent on the practice of finning (i.e., removal of the fins and discard of the carcass at sea), which is widely prohibited in international fora and in U.S. domestic law. In 2014, the United States, Brazil, Chile, and the European Union tabled a proposal to amend the conservation measure to require landing of sharks with fins naturally attached to discourage the finning of incidentally-caught sharks that are retained and to improve the data collected on sharks. The proposal is similar to that proposed by the United States during the 2011 and 2013 annual meetings. Many members spoke in strong support of the proposal but consensus on the change could not be reached.

Fishery regulations:

The conservation measures for the fishery regulation category identify fishing seasons, catch limits, bycatch limits, and closed areas. Members currently target toothfish, icefish, and krill.

In 2013, the Commission endorsed a work plan to develop a feedback management strategy for the krill fishery in the Atlantic Sector. Feedback management is a strategy for regularly revising catch limits and the geographic distribution of fishing on the basis of monitoring results that indicate the status of the krill stock, the performance of krill-dependent predators such as seals and penguins, and the performance of the fishery.

Protected areas:

The Scientific Committees established a system of sites contributing data to the CCAMLR Ecosystem Monitoring Program (CEMP). These sites could be protected if the Commission decides it desirable.

In 2009, CCAMLR established its first marine protected area (MPA) in the South Orkney Island southern shelf. In 2011, it adopted a general framework for establishment of CCAMLR MPAs. Proposals for establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs) remained a high priority in 2014. For the fourth time, the United States and New Zealand's proposed an MPA in the Ross Sea region. The proposal would protect key areas that support essential ecosystem processes and safeguard critical areas for whales, seals, penguins, commercially valuable and other fish stocks, and the species they feed upon. The Ross Sea Region's unique scientific, biodiversity, and ecosystem characteristics, make it an area of tremendous conservation and scientific value to be protected for current and future generations. Australia, France, and EU proposed, also for the fourth time, a representative system of MPAs in East Antarctica. Consensus was not reached on either proposal.

Proposals for establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs) were given high priority. However, for the third time, Members could not reach agreement on the United States and New Zealand's joint proposal to establish a MPA in the Ross Sea Region and the proposal from Australia, France, and EU to establish a representative system of MPAs in East Antarctica.

D. Activities and Meetings

The following meetings will take place in 2015:

Subgroup on Acoustic Survey and Analysis Methods (SG-ASAM) March 9 to 13 in Busan, Korea;
Working Group on Statistics, Assessments and Modeling (WG-SAM) June 29 to July 3 in Warsaw, Poland;
Working Group on Ecosystem Monitoring and Management (WG-EMM) July 6 to 17 in Warsaw, Poland;
Working Group on Fish Stock Assessment (WG-FSA) October 5 to 16 in Hobart, Australia;
Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR) October 19 to 23, 2014 in Hobart, Australia; and
Commission (CCAMLR) October 19 to 30, 2014 in Hobart, Australia

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